

Last of the litter

Snowflake and Frosty, a pair of 7-week-old mixed spaniels, are the kind of fellows that will warm your heart and home. They are residing at the Michigan Humane Society Mini Shelter, 1329 S. Woodward, and can be reached at 645-599.

Murphy backs new M-275 alternative along the route that had been acquired for M.275 to M.59. It would not be a freeway. Rather it would be a four to five-lane trunkline and parkway. Murphy noted McCornell's proposal is similar to his own Lakeland Parkway, which would have followed mostly local routes but would have extended all the way north to.? Both plans are aimed at solving traffic problems without unnecessary damage to the environment or too rapid population growth.

Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy has added his endorsement to a plan for a north-south state trunkline along the western edges of Farm-ington Hills and West Bloomfield

ington Hills and West Bloomfield Township.
The trunkline has been proposed by County Commissioner Robert McCon-ell (R-Farmington Hills). It is backed by Commerce Township officials, among others, as an alternative to the M-275 project, cancelled by the State Highway Commission a year aggo. Of western Oakland County, Murphysid, "This area, with a population of 175,000, is much larger than most cities in the nation, but does not have a north-south road wider than two lanes."

BEGINNING AT the interchange of I-696 with the I-275 and I-96 freeways, McConnell's route would follow Hag-McConnell's route would follow Hag-gerty Road north to the vicinity of Pontiac Trail.

There it would swing northwest

Water rate fracas has Kuhn steamed

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Oakland County Drain Commis-sioner George W. Kuhn is trying to block further increases in sewage dis-posal rates charged by the City of Detroit's Water and Sewage Depart-ment.

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betroit's Werr and Sewage Dy or
betroit's Werr and Sewage Department and speaked by a federal
court to resolve further disputes over
the water and sewage department's
services and charges. He has charged
that Detroit does not yet need the
funds which would be raised by the
funds which would be raised by the
funds which would be raised by the
funcrease and that those rates discriminate against suburban customers.
Kuhn said delays in upgrading
Detroit's sewage facility have reduced
the amount of money needed to match
fedgral grants for the \$500-million
improvements projects.

"We shouldn't be paying higher
rates until Detroit actually begins construction," said Bob Predericks, chied
feeply drain commissioner for Oakland County.

DETROIT AGREED last Sentem-

DETROIT AGREED last September, to a timetable to improve its sewage treatment facilities, which until that time had failed to meet federal Environmental Protection Agency

environmental Protection Agency standards.

The federal government will pay for 75 per cent of the project's cost and the state will contribute five per cent. Detroit planned to make up the remaining 20 per cent with the revenues of a three-part rate increase.

The first part of the increase went into effect last fall, with the second part to take effect July 1. Another increase is eshechtled for July 1, 1979. Kuhn has asked the panel to readjust Detroit's rate schedule and guarantee that the rates will be increased to provide orly as much revenue as is actually needed.

JOHN KANTERS, director of the water and sewage department, said the city has met every deadline in applying for the federal grant money required to begin improvements.

"There's been no change in what the feds or the state government requires of us," he said.

Kanters said that if there has been we showness: it has been on the part

Kanters said that if there has been any slowness, it has been on the part of the federal and state governments in approving the department's grant applications.

The Oakland County drain commissioner also charged that the department's new rate structure makes sub-

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urban customers pay more than Detroit customers even though the cost of providing service to each is about the same. "They're raising more from us than they are from their own customers," Fredericks said.

The alleged discriminatory charge revolves around differing "rates of return." Fredericks described the "rate of return" as part of an accounting formula for determining revenue. Kuhn said the different rates of return are "not based upon any rational basis," and has asked the penalt to change the practice.

KANTERS SAID the rate of return is an integral part of a nationally recognized accounting system and has been upheld as a legal rate-esting practice in circuit court. The practice, be said, was the basis of an earlier suit filed by the Oakland County Drain Commission and was upheld.

That decision, however, has been appealed by the Oakland County Drain Commission, and a decision is pending in the Michigan Court of Appeals.

"It's legitimate, proper and in accordance with a rational standard," Kanters said. "wet supported by a national organization which speaks for an industry."

an industry."

IN THE SAME complaint, Kuhn also
that "the present method of charged that "the present method of providing information to the suburban customer is unreasonable and inadequate."

He said no annual reports have been

He said no annual reports have been released by the Detroit Water and Sewage Department for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1976 and June 30, 1977. He also said the monthly comparative financial statements, mandated by September's consent judgment, are "routinely prepared late." Oakland County, Kuhn said, received the September 1977 report Dec. 30, and that he has not yet seen the statements for October, November and December and

the statements for October, November and December.

"It is extremely difficult," Kuhn said, "for suburban customers to be able to formulate any informed judgments as to the reasonableness and necessity of the proposed rate increases.

"The reporting habits of the Detroit Water and Sewage Department," he concluded, "are such that the information as to the proposed revenue requirements is lacking and is not in a form that permits suburban customers to have sufficient advance information to know whether the proposed revenue requirements are fair and accurate."

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THE FOUR-MAN highway commission last month ordered its staff to study McConnell's proposal, along with another proposal.

The other is to turn Haggerty, Union Lake and Williams Lake roads into a straight north-south trunkline.

That proposal came from Steve Rosman, who was spokesman for a now-dormant group called Citizens in Opposition to M-275.

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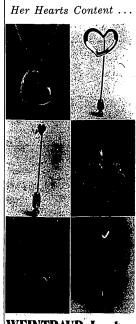
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